



Arizona Department of Gaming

TRIBAL GAMING • RACING • BOXING & MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Daniel H. Bergin
Director

Amanda Jacinto
Public Information Officer
Tel 602-255-3806
Cell 480-403-1265
ajacinto@azgaming.gov

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March Madness Brackets Leave Many with Questions about Illegal Gambling

PHOENIX— Fans are getting ready for NCAA basketball tournaments and that means the craze of March Madness and brackets are underway.

Across the State people are participating in betting pools with family, friends, and coworkers. While many people spend a lot of time meticulously choosing their brackets to ensure a win is a slam dunk, not much time is spent asking if the bet is actually legal.

"No matter who you are or where you work, it is easy to get caught up in March Madness," says director of the Arizona Department of Gaming Dan Bergin. "We want to ensure people are doing things like brackets the right way and not outside of the law."

The Arizona Department of Gaming has some advice for those thinking of jumping into an office pool this year. The key is to see if someone directly or indirectly is benefiting from the gambling. It's important to ensure that only the players in the pool can win and that all the money is paid back out to one or more of the players.

However, if the organizer of the pool takes a percentage from the bets or charges a certain amount to participate, under the law they would be getting a benefit and are subject to prosecution.

"If somebody is getting that cut, we want to make sure they know it's illegal," said Bergin.

Gambling maybe illegal in Arizona if any of the following conditions exist:

- The host of the game requires that players pay fees in order to participate
- The host requires a cover charge, donation, or "voluntary" donation from players who want to participate in the game
- The host takes a percentage of the money the players wager or win
- The host requires a minimum purchase (food, drink, or any other item)
- The host provides equipment (chairs, chips, tables, cards, or other items) and charges players rental fees, equipment fees, user fees or other fees in order to participate